

Stories from the Democratic Convention
By Jose, age 17

The most important person we interviewed was a man who came to the U.S, undocumented, when he was 16 years old. He worked in the field earning \$2 an hour. Because of Ronald Reagan's policy he was able to apply for residency and became a leader of an important Hispanic organization. Later he started his own restaurant and earned an important role in his state. Now he's an important man. What I learned about this man was that no matter who you are, if you want to become someone in life you can.

At the convention, most people wanted to be interviewed. People seemed to feel that immigration is a big issue and we need to do something about it. People asked me why I am working on this movie and why I care about this issue. I answered with the truth - that I have friends who are undocumented and I don't like what they are going through.

My opinions about politicians changed because I noticed that there are politicians who do about care the immigration issue and about undocumented youth. They know that they have to do something about it and they don't want to separate kids from their parents.

The most exciting thing that happened in the convention was that Governor Bill Richardson shook my hand and talked to me about the immigration issue. He said he was with us on the issue and he told me this in Spanish - "Estamos con tigo!" I got on the convention floor for a short time, but that was enough to interview Bill Richardson and Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell.

To the people that say we have blown the immigration issue out of perspective, I think they are wrong. Tell me, what are we going to do with all the undocumented people in this country? Are you going to deport all of them and leave their kids with no one? What kind of America is this then?

We are making a big deal of this issue because kids are graduating from high school and can't start a career because they are undocumented and they have to hide. This issue is important because I want my people to be able to have rights like any American in this country. We are all immigrants in this country except the Native Americans because they were here before all of us.

The most surprising thing that happened at the convention happened one night when we were leaving an immigration speech in a fancy hotel. Anne, Andre and I were going up the stairs when I saw a Latino man. I don't know why I focused on him and not on the other people who were around me. Then I realized that I had seen that man on T.V a night before when Hillary spoke at the convention. That man had been standing next to Bill Clinton. But I had also seen him somewhere else. I couldn't remember where.

I just stared at him as I was walking near him and tried to remember who he was. I asked Anne and Andre if they knew him and they both answered no. I told him I knew his face and now he was an important person because last night he was sitting next to Bill Clinton

during Hillary's speech but they didn't know him. So we were out of the hotel and by the front door and I was still curious who he was.

Anne and Andre told me to go up to the man and ask for his name and give him our "Papers" postcard. At first I didn't want to but my curiosity made me go. Carrying my backpack, I went up to him and a photographer told me to hold on. I told him no problem and in less than two minutes he turned to me and told me to look at the camera and they took a picture of us together.

After that I told him "I've seen you around but I don't remember who you are." Then I just gave him the postcard and he looked at me and at the post card with my picture while I was explaining "Papers" is about. He said, "So you are another undocumented youth that can't go to college?" I answered, "No, I have my papers but I am helping my people." He replied in Spanish, "So you are special because you're helping your people to get their voice." He was in a hurry and he shook my hand and said bye.

I went towards where Anne and Andre were and they asked me who the man was and I told them I forgot to ask. So Andre went back to find him and when he came back he told us that the man was wondering who I was too. Andre explained that the man I had been curious about was the mayor of Los Angeles, California. I told Anne and Andre, "no wonder his face seemed familiar." After that I felt good because I found out who the man was and he is the mayor of Los Angeles California, the city where I am from.

Monday

The first thing we filmed in Denver was the Minute Man rally where we stayed for six hours. At first they looked at us weird because I was the only brown person there. But when the time passed and some protesters came and we filmed the protesters, the Minute Men thought we were on the side of the Minute Men. Later they opened up more to us and even an older lady talked to me like I was against all the immigrants.

We interviewed a Minute Man. His neighbor was a Mexican lady who beat him up but he still said she was pretty and smarter than him. We filmed some, what their thoughts were about immigration. Their main subject was that they didn't want any immigrants in their country because he thinks they are taking jobs and not paying taxes. We interviewed a Republican Native American man, the leader of the Minute Men, and someone who was running for elected office in Denver.

Tuesday

We went to an event hosted by the Hispanic Institute. We were invited to film what went on there. They were leaders talking about Obama and Clinton and how the media made it seem like Obama shouldn't be President and that he hated Hillary. They talked about racism and sexism.

After that our Director, Anne Galisky, and Assistant Producer, Andre Nakazawa, wanted to get closer to the convention so we walked all the way down there. When we got there we started to ask if anyone had by chance an extra credential. Anne was good at finding

tickets and got me one. So they packed me up with the small camera and flyers and I headed down to security and inside the Pepsi center. Then I found out that Anne had gotten another credential for Andre. So Andre and I watched the speech of Hillary together. We then went down to the floor and interviewed Bill Richardson and the Governor of Pennsylvania Ed Rendell. After the Convention I was so tired and walked to the Hispanic Institute party bare foot. At that party we interviewed more people, such as the organizer of the Hispanic Institute. We went back to the hotel around 1:00 am.

Wednesday

The third day we were invited to an immigration panel hosted by Muslim-Americans at a fancy hotel. We filmed some great speeches about immigration. A famous radio station host talked. One man gave an amazing talk about what ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) did in some of the recent raids. He explained how ICE didn't let anyone out the room until they showed that they were legal in the U.S. He spoke about how I.C.E violated their rights. We interviewed the speaker and another important Latina leader immigration reform. When we were packing up, the organizer of the conference wanted to interview our crew about "Papers." He then aired our interview on Indian television.